

The following claims are presented for examination:

1. (currently amended) A method comprising:  
receiving a first plurality of protocol data units at a first input, wherein all of said first plurality of protocol data units are en route to a first congestible device;  
maintaining at a protocol-data-unit excisor a first queue [[of]] for said first plurality of protocol data units ~~en route to a first congestible device~~;  
receiving at said protocol-data-unit excisor a flow control signal that indicates whether said first congestible device is ready to receive one or more of said protocol data units from said first queue; and  
selectively dropping, at said protocol-data-unit excisor, one or more of said protocol data units based on a first metric of said first queue.
2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said protocol-data-unit excisor decides whether to drop a protocol data unit based on Random Early Detection.
3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said indication is conveyed using back-pressure flow control.
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said indication is conveyed using the Pause frame procedure of IEEE 802.3.
5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
receiving a second plurality of protocol data units at a second input, wherein all of said second plurality of protocol data units are en route to a second congestible device;  
maintaining at said protocol-data-unit excisor a second queue [[of]] for said for said second plurality of protocol data units ~~en route to a second congestible device~~;  
receiving at said protocol-data-unit excisor a flow control signal that indicates whether said second congestible device is ready to receive one or more of said protocol data units from said second queue; and  
selectively dropping, at said protocol-data-unit excisor, one or more of said protocol data units based on a second metric of said second queue.

**6. (currently amended)** A protocol-data-unit excisor comprising:  
a first input for receiving a first plurality of protocol data units, wherein all of said first plurality of protocol data units are en route to a first congestible device;

a first queue for storing ~~one or more~~ said first plurality of protocol data units ~~en route to a first congestible device~~;

a first receiver for receiving a flow control signal that indicates whether said first congestible device is ready to receive one or more of said protocol data units from said first queue; and

a processor for selectively dropping one or more of said protocol data units based on a metric of said first queue.

**7. (previously presented)** The protocol-data-unit excisor of claim 6 wherein said indication is conveyed using back-pressure flow control.

**8. (previously presented)** The protocol-data-unit excisor of claim 6 wherein said indication is conveyed using the Pause frame procedure of IEEE 802.3.

**9. (previously presented)** The protocol-data-unit excisor of claim 6 wherein said protocol-data-unit excisor decides whether to drop a protocol data unit based on Random Early Detection.

**10. (currently amended)** The protocol-data-unit excisor of claim 6 further comprising:

a second input for receiving a second plurality of protocol data units, wherein all of said second plurality of protocol data units are en route to a second congestible device;

a second queue for storing ~~one or more~~ said second plurality of protocol data units ~~en route to a second congestible device~~; and

a second receiver for receiving a flow control signal that indicates whether said second congestible device is ready to receive one or more of said protocol data units from said second queue;

wherein said processor is also for selectively dropping one or more of said protocol data units based on a metric of said second queue.